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SUBJECT: UNDP RESREP ON NEXT STEPS FOLLOWING TIBAIJUKA
REPORT RELEASE

Classified By: CDA Eric Schultz, reason 1.4 (b) (d)

Summary

1. (C) UNDP Resrep Agostinho Zacharias briefed the donor community July 28 on the UN,s next steps following the release last week of UN Special Envoy Tibaijuka,s report on Operation Restore Order. Zacharias said the goal was to work with the GOZ to end further demolitions and to provide relief to the victims. He appealed for donor support. In a separate meeting with the CDA August 1, Zacharias said the GOZ was increasingly cooperative with relief efforts and was privately admitting the operation had been a mistake. Zacharias added that the transition process in Zimbabwe was underway and that this view should animate the international community,s dealings with the GOZ and would be central to the proposed trip by Secretary General Annan to Zimbabwe. End Summary.

Donor Briefing

2. (SBU) Zacharias told the donor community that the UN would focus on implementing the recommendations in Tibaijuka,s report. The first step in that process had been to establish UN-GOZ working groups at the policy level and at the technical level. The UN,s goals for the working groups were threefold: stop further demolitions, convince the GOZ to recognize the humanitarian consequences of the operation, and secure unimpeded access to victims. The Canadian representative asked if donors could be included in the working groups. Zacharias replied that he would ask the GOZ.

3. (SBU) Zacharias said the UN also planned to establish a liaison officer in his office who would spearhead a coordinated approach to improving the operating environment for NGOs. He asked donors to fund the position. The British DFID representative said his country would consider the request. Zacharias also announced that the UN had established two task forces in New York to assist him and his team in implementing Tibaijuka,s recommendations. He stressed that his office had the lead; the task forces were to provide assistance: one with political issues; the other with humanitarian issues.

4. (SBU) Zacharias said the UN would be further modifying the &flash appeal8 for \$10 million that it had recently issued. The appeal would still be for three months but would now be a &joint appeal8 with the GOZ and would reflect government input. Zacharias said the amount would also likely rise. He hoped to release the appeal by the end of the first week of August. (N.B. IOM representatives told us August 1 that the appeal was now up to \$18 million; see septel). A second appeal was planned for three months from now, which would address the longer-term consequences of Operation Restore Order. USAID Director noted that while donors were committed to providing humanitarian assistance, they would not be sympathetic to such a long-term appeal, especially for rebuilding housing, absent a dramatically different approach by the GOZ.

Separate Meeting With CDA

5. (C) In a separate meeting with CDA August 1, Zacharias said the report,s release had not affected his access to senior GOZ officials. In fact, the GOZ was if anything even more cooperative. They appeared to realize that Operation Restore Order had been a mistake. The CDA noted that to date the GOZ had refused to accept the report, let alone agree to act on its recommendations. Zacharias acknowledged the point. Part of the purpose of the working groups was to get them to admit the operation had been a mistake by recognizing

its humanitarian consequences.

16. (C) Moreover, Zacharias said he had met with Security Minister Mutasa on July 29, who had not only acknowledged that mistakes had been made but had offered GOZ cooperation for UN efforts to provide temporary housing for the operation's victims. Mutasa had suggested that IOM initiate a pilot program to provide tents in his home district of Headlands. IOM had then traveled to Headlands July 30 with Mutasa, Agriculture Minister Made, and Justice Minister Chinimasa. IOM had reported back to Zacharias that Mutasa had repeated his characterization of the operation as a mistake in public and had called on the local security forces to cooperate with relief efforts.

17. (C) The CDA said that if the GOZ were going to publicly acknowledge the operation to have been a mistake, they would need someone to blame. Zacharias agreed, noting that he had heard that President Mugabe had upbraided Local Government Minister Chombo on two separate occasions for allowing the operation to get out of control. He was a likely fall guy. Personally, Zacharias said he hoped that the Governor of Manicaland (Mutare) where some of the worst abuses had occurred would be offered up for prosecution. (N.B. An unabashed booster of Restore Order who earlier had publicly and privately taken credit for its conception, Mutasa would be another scapegoat candidate.)

18. (C) Zacharias said he had also heard that the Mujurus were spreading the word that they had had nothing to do with the operation and were claiming it had been a plot to discredit them. The CDA said that was highly unlikely but that their disavowal was entirely predictable. Increasingly it seemed that everything was being filtered through the prism of succession politics. Zacharias agreed, noting that his view was that the transition process had begun when Mugabe had chosen Joyce Mujuru as Vice President and heir apparent last December. It might take until 2008, but Mugabe was clearly on his way out and less involved in day-to-day governance.

19. (C) Zacharias said he felt that this view, that the transition was underway, should be central to defining the objectives for the Secretary General's eventual trip to Zimbabwe. In that regard, he asked the CDA's advice on what Annan should try to accomplish. The CDA responded that the overriding objective should be to speed the transition. The longer the transition took, the more damage it would do to the country. More specifically, Annan should press for ways to ensure the transition was open and democratic. To that end, he should press for measures to reduce government control, such as reopening newspapers, depoliticizing the judiciary, liberalizing the economy, and establishing an independent electoral body.

110. (C) Zacharias said he planned to ask for the views of other key international players, including the UK, and South Africa. The CDA asked if he included Nigerian President Obasanjo. Zacharias said Obasanjo's relationship with the GOZ was such that he was not a major player. That said, Obasanjo's request to former Mozambiquan President Chissano to attempt a mediation role had been welcome and showed promise. Zacharias, a Mozambiquan national, said Chissano had already asked for his advice on how to proceed.

Comment

111. (C) We would agree with Zacharias that the transition has begun here but do not necessarily share his view that the international community should therefore look past the current situation. In the near term, it is essential that the pressure be kept on the regime to ensure that Mugabe goes sooner rather than later, that the transition is open and democratic, and that whoever succeeds him rejects his policies. The Secretary General's visit, for which there is as yet no date, can play a key role in that regard, especially by also keeping the pressure on regional leaders such as South Africa to play more constructive roles in ending the Zimbabwe crisis.
SCHULTZ